



Automotive Man of the Year 2013

Siddhartha Lal

MD & CEO, Eicher Motors Ltd

One of the defining factors in the Indian automotive industry is an emerging breed of head honchos that go about their task with not just business acumen but also delivering products brimming with enthusiasm and vitality. While men like Venu Srinivasan and Rajiv Bajaj are already well known in the two-wheeler world, what sets up Siddhartha Lal differently from these two is that he has nurtured a moribund brand back from the dead, has invested in its heritage and backed it up with modern technology to help take it to global leadership in its class of motorcycles (250cc to 750cc).

However, that is not the only reason that Siddhartha Lal is our Automotive Man of the Year. It is also for his infectious enthusiasm as a biker and immense patience to add to his foresight in charting out Royal Enfield's future, more so when just a decade and a half ago it could have been consigned to history. I may not be very different from many other global pundits in thinking that Royal Enfield's best years are just beginning and if the Continental GT is anything to go by, expect many authentic yet technologically contemporary motorcycles from his fertile imagination.

It would have been wrong to close now but Sid is both a man of enthusiasm as well as a harbinger of change for commerce and industry. His piloting the ship at Eicher-Volvo is another indicator of the patient but aware game he is playing. After the established duo-poly of Tata Motors & Ashok Leyland in the commercial vehicle space in the country, Eicher-Volvo has positioned itself brilliantly to chip away at this duo while also being comfortably ahead of the rest of the newer brawn pack. Enthusiastic as a biker and sportsman and humble yet on-the-ball in his business dealings, Siddhartha Lal is our Automotive Man of the Year 2013.